Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, UK

SUBJECT: ROLLS-ROYCE ENGINE FOR BOEING 747

REF: LONDON 12189

ANNOUNCEMENT BY LOCKHEED ON SEPT 19 THAT IT HAS SOLD SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES TWO TRISTAR AIRLINERS WITH THE ROLLS-ROYCE RB 211-524 ENGINE HAS FULFILLED THE UKG'S PRIME CONDITION THAT FIRM ORDERS MUST BE IN HAND BEFORE GOVERNMENT FUNDS ARE COMMITTED FOR THE PRODUCTION ON THE 524 ENGINE AND IN THE WAKE OF THE LOCKHEED ANNOUNCEMENT THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER PRESSURE TO LAUNCH THE PROJECT FROM BOTH THE MANUFACTURER AND PLANT WORKERS, HAS NOW INDICATED THAT GOVERNMENT FUNDS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF THE BIGGER ENGINE WILL BE FORTHCOMING.

2. STILL UNDECIDED,HOWEVER,IS WHETHER FURTHER WORK ON THE ENGINE AND ON THE DESIGN MODIFICATION OF THE WING PYLONS OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL TAKE PLACE IN ORDER TO ADAPT THE 524 ENGINE FOR USE ABOARD THE BOEING 747. INDUSTRY SECRETARY BENN, IN ANNOUNCING LOCKHEED'S SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINE SALE AND THE GO-AHEAD FOR 524 ENGINE PRODUCTION, IS REPORTED BY THE PRESS TO HAVE REPEATED THE EARLIER-REPORTED CONDITION THAT THERE MUST BE ANOTHER FIRM ORDER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR THE ROLLS-POWERED 747 BEYOND THE BRITISH AIRWAYS

ORDER NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION BEFORE GOVERNMENT FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ROLLS-ROYCE FOR THE 747 PROJECT. THIS HAS GIVEN RISE TO SOME SPECULATION THAT ROLLS MAY TRY TO WORK OUT A PRIVATE DEAL WITH BOEING THAT WOULD AVOID THE NEED FOR UKG FINANCE.

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